

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00097 241905Z

62

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TAGS: PINT, SF

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER MEETS AGAIN WITH CRC LIAISON COMMITTEE

REF: CAPE TOWN 0515, 0740

1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER AGAIN MET WITH COLORED POLITICAL LEADERS (WIZH LABOR PARTY MEMBERS BOYCOTTING). CONCESSIONS TO COLORED REQUESTS MADE BY PRIME MINISTER ARE DESIGNED TO STRENGTHEN SEPARATENESS OF COLORED COMMUNITY AND ITS RIGHT TO PARTICIPATION IN WHITE POLITICAL STRUCTURE AGAIN DENIED. IDENTIFICATION OF FEDERAL PARTY MEMBERS WITH THIS MEETING AND ITS CONCLUSIONS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE DEVELOPED AS MAJOR ISSUE IN FORTHCOMING CAMPAIGN FOR CRC ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN ONE OF HIS CURRENT SERIES OF MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVE MEMBERS OF SOUTH AFRICA'S NON-WHITE COMMUNITIES, PRIME MINISTER VORSTER MET ON JAN 23 WITH THE LIAISON COMMITTEE OF THE COLOURED PERSONS REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL (CRC). PRIME MINISTER WAS ACCOMPANIED BY MINISTER OF COLOURED RELATIONS VAN DER MERWE, SECRETARY FOR INFORMATION RHOODIE, AS WELL AS OTHER COLOURED AFFAIRS OFFICIALS. J.A. RABIE, ACTING LEADER OF THE FEDERAL
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PAGE 02 CAPE T 00097 241905Z

PARTY, LED CRC DELEGATION WHICH ALSO CONSIST OF MEMBERS OF

FEDERAL PARTY AND MINOR COLORED PARTIES AND INDEPENDENTS. LABOR PARTY DID NOT PARTICIPATE.

3. ACCORDING TO REPORTS, LIAISON COMMITTEE PRESENTED TO PRIME MINISTER A MEMORANDUM BASED AT LEAST IN PART ON ITS RECOMMENDATIONS MADE IN RESPONSE TO PRIME MINISTER'S INVITATION TO CRC TO COME UP WITH IDEAS THAT WOULD STRENGTHEN CRC (CAPE TOWN A-135, PARA 7, AND REFEELS) AND REITERATED REQUEST FOR DIRECT PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION AND FULL CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS FOR COLOREDS. (WE DO NOT YET HAVE TEXT OF THIS MEMORANDUM.)

4. COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AFTER MEETING CONTAINED FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) FACT THAT PRIME MINISTER AND COLORED LEADERS WOULD MEET IN CONSTRUCTIVE DISCUSSION SHOWED THAT GOVERNMENT AND CRC WERE ON THE RIGHT ROAD.

(B) GOVT REALIZED NEED FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS BETWEEN "WHITE NATION AND COLORED COMMUNITY." THE COLOREDS OUGHT TO BECOME MORE DEPENDENT ON THEMSELVES. IT WAS GOVT POLICY TO CREATE CONDITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE THIS POSSIBLE.

(C) GOVT POLICY ON THE FUTURE POWERS OF THE CRC WAS NOT STATIC, BUT CHANGE SHOULD GO HAND-IN-HAND WITH GREATER RESPONSIBILITIES AND GREATER SELF-SUFFICIENCY ON PART OF COLOREDS. CONCEPT OF ONE PARLIAMENT WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE FOR THIS WOULD LEAD TO "POLITICAL CHAOS."

(D) INCREASINGLY, GOVERNING POWER WAS BEING PLACED IN HANDS OF COUNCILS, BOARDS AND AUTHORITIES OPERATING IN REGIONAL AND LOCAL FIELDS. EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT BY COLOREDS REQUIRED THEIR REPRESENTATION ON THESE BODIES.

(E) THE PROPOSALS MADE BY THE LIAISON COMMITTEE WITH REGARD TO THE POWERS OF THE CRC WERE AGREED TO IN PRINCIPLE (BUT THIS DID NOT MEAN APPROVAL OF SPECIFIC PROPOSALS). THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CRC SHOULD BE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE PORTFOLIOS OF FINANCE; EDUCATION; SOCIAL WELFARE AND PENSIONS; LOCAL GOVERNMENT; AGRICULTURE; SPORT, CULTURE AND RECREATION; AND INFORMATION. A COMMITTEE WOULD BE APPOINTED TO INVESTIGATE PRACTICAL ASPECTS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 CAPE T 00097 241905Z

OF THIS AND OTHER PROPOSALS.

(F) PRIME MINISTER REAFFIRMED PRINCIPLE OF PARITY OF SALARIES AND AGREED THAT IT BE IMPLEMENTED "WITH A MINIMUM OF DELAY."

(G) A NEW FISCAL ARRANGEMENT FOR THE CRC WOULD BE DEVELOPED BY THE BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH.

(H) DELEGATION OF MISCELLANEOUS FUNCTIONS TO THE CRC AND STRENGTHENING COLORED PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT WOULD REQUIRE STUDY.

(I) PRIME MINISTER AGREED THAT COLOREDS SHOULD SERVE ON VARIOUS STATUTORY BOARDS. THIS WOULD BE REFERRED TO THE CABINET AND MIGHT REQUIRE AMENDMENT OF EXISTING LEGISLATION. THE NAME OF RACE CLASSIFICATION BOARD SHOULD BE CHANGED TO POPULATION REGISTRATION BOARD.

(J) "DISCRIMINATION ON GROUNDS OF COLOR" WAS DIFFICULT QUESTION WITH MANY EMOTIONAL OVERTONES. THE ELIMINATION OF THOSE MEASURES "THAT SERVE NO PURPOSE" WOULD BE DISCUSSED IN CABINET. "WHERE POSSIBLE AND WHERE IT WOULD NOT AFFECT THE RIGHT OF A PEOPLE TO PROTECT THEIR IDENTIFY, THE GOVT WOULD ACT TO ENSURE THAT IRRITATING MEASURES WERE ELIMINATED." MATTER WOULD NOT BE RUSHED, HOWEVER, FOR "WITHOUT THE RIGHT ATTITUDE AMONG THE PEOPLE CONCERNED, NO AMOUNT OF PRESSURE FROM ABOVE WOULD HAVE THE DESIRED EFFECT."

5. COMMUNIQUE STATED ALL ITS DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS WERE UNANIMOUS. FEDERAL PARTY LEADER RABIE LATER DESCRIBED TALKS AS BREAKTHROUGH IN COLORED-WHITE RELATIONS AND THE MOST SUCCESSFUL ONES YET HELD BETWEEN GOVT AND LIAISON COMMITTEE. SONY LEON, LEADER OF CRC OPPOSITION LABOR PARTY, SAID CONCESSIONS GRANTED AT MEETING WERE AN "ELECTION GIMMICK" AND THAT FEDERAL PARTY HAD "SOLD ITS SOUL" BY ACCEPTING THEM.

6. COMMENT: IT IS QUITE CLEAR THAT PRIME MINISTER IS BY NO MEANS PREPARED TO ALTER GOVT'S POLICY OF SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT FOR COLOREDS. CONCESSIONS MADE OR ADUMBRATED DURING MEETING ADD UP TO MEANS OF ACCENTUATING AND INSTITUTIONALIZING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 CAPE T 00097 241905Z

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WHITES AND COLOREDS THAT ALREADY ARE SO FULLY ENFORCED UNDER APARTHEID LEGISLATION. QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT COLOREDS SHOULD STRIVE FOR FULL RIGHTS OF CITIZENSHIP IN A MULTI-RACIAL SOCIETY WILL MOST LIKELY BE CENTRAL ISSUE OF FORTHCOMING CAMPAIGN FOR ELECTIONS TO NEXT CRC WHICH IS ANTICIPATED FOR MARCH 19. LABOR PARTY WILL ACCUSE FEDERAL LEADERS OF HAVING TURNED THEIR BACKS ON COLORED COMMUNITY IN EXCHANGE FOR MEANINGLESS "CONCESSIONS" THAT WILL AT MOST ONLY ENHANCE THEIR OWN INDIVIDUAL PRESTIGE AND POWER. FEDERAL LEADERS WILL ENDEAVOR CONVINCE ELECTORATE THAT CONCESSIONS ARE REAL AND NECESSARY STEPPING STONES TOWARD EVENTUAL FULL PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL MAINSTREAM.
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